

California Electric and Magnetic Fields Program N E W S L E T T E R

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES UPDATE January/February 2001

YEAR 2000 PROGRESS REPORT TO THE CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

The California Department of Health Services (CDHS) leadership reviewed and approved the California EMF Program's Progress Report for the year 2000. This report, which has been sent to the PUC, contains information on the program's progress between November 1999 and November 2000. This report will be distributed to stakeholders and interested parties in the next regular program mailing, and will also be posted on the Program's web site.

EPIDEMIOLOGY WORKSHOP PROCEEDINGS NOW AVAILABLE

In January of 1999, the California EMF Program held a workshop in which leading EMF epidemiologists summarized and discussed the epidemiological evidence on EMF. The Program contracted with the participants to write and discuss studies of the possible relationships between EMF and various health endpoints. After the workshop, the authors revised their papers and the EMF Program staff wrote summaries of the workshop's discussion periods for publication as the workshop proceedings. These proceedings were submitted to the Bioelectromagnetics Journal, where they were peer reviewed and published. The special journal issue containing the workshop proceedings is now available.

Members of the public can order the proceedings directly from the Bioelectromagnetics journal. To order a copy, please contact the journal's Customer Service Department at (212) 850-8776. Stakeholders and members of the public are welcome to submit comments on these proceedings before Friday, April 30, 2001. Since the proceedings are now finalized and will undergo no further revisions, the program will not respond to the comments received, but all comments received by the due date will be attached to the final report when it is submitted to the California Public Utilities Commission. If you choose to submit comments, please note your name and the project on which you are commenting at the top of the first page, and send them to the attention of Jack Collins, California EMF Program Administrator.

MILESTONES

- Year 2000 Progress Report has been submitted to the CPUC
- Epidemiology Workshop Proceedings have been published
- Science Advisory Panel has completed their review of the Risk Evaluation
- Peer review of the School Policy Project is complete

RESEARCH UNIT PROGRESS

Power Grid/Land Use Policy Analysis: Detlof von Winterfeldt has discussed with the EMF Program staff his revisions of the project products in response to the peer reviewers' comments. Dr. von Winterfeldt expects to deliver the final report and software models to the Program within the next several weeks.

School Policy Project: The Program has received the peer reviewers' comments on the School Policy Project. Keith Florig and Brock Bernstein are reviewing the final report accordingly.

Prospective Miscarriage Study: A journal article describing the results of this study of EMF and spontaneous abortion has been submitted for publication. De-Kun Li is working on some supplementary analyses that have been requested by the Program.

Policy Integration: Early drafts of the Policy Integration have been written and circulated among the staff for comment.

Risk Evaluation: Comments on the Risk Evaluation draft have been received from each member of the Science Advisory Panel (SAP). Most of the comments were supportive and only minor revisions are required. The Evaluation's authors are currently working on these revisions and on detailed responses to the SAP comments to attach to the revised draft when it is sent to the DHS Director.

SAP Chairman Warren Winkelstein has requested that the staff hold a SAP meeting in early May 2001 for the Panel members to discuss the Risk Evaluation public comment draft. That draft is still scheduled for release in April contingent on approval by the Department of Health Services leadership in Sacramento. The SAP meeting in May will be open to the public, and will take place at the Harris Building at 1515 Clay Street in Oakland.

EDUCATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE UNIT PROGRESS

FAREWELL TO GERRI LEE

Dr. Geraldine Lee, an epidemiologist with the California EMF Program and the California Department of Health Services Environmental Health Investigations Branch for many years, has accepted a fellowship and new job in health economics in private industry. She will continue to have limited involvement with the EMF Program, but her last full time day with the Program is Friday, February 23, 2001. Not only was Gerri an original member of the California EMF Program staff from its beginning in 1994, but she also was involved in the earlier EMF work done by the Department. Gerri's contributions both as the head of the program's Education and Technical Assistance Unit and as a member of the research staff have been very valuable and will be greatly missed. We wish her the best as she begins this new stage of her career.

RESEARCH PROJECT NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARIES

Power Grid Policy Project: The Health Educator has begun outlining a relatively non-technical summary of the Power Grid and Land Use Policy Project. This summary will provide a brief description of the overall approach and results of the Power Grid Policy Project. The outline will be completed and the summary will be written when a final version of the project report and software models are available.

School Policy Project Non-Technical Summary: The Health Education Assistant has initiated work on the School Policy Project non-technical summary. Currently in outline form, this summary will describe the rationales of various statewide magnetic field policies for California public schools.

Non-Technical Summary of the Risk Evaluation Guidelines and Non-Technical Summary of The School Exposure Assessment:

These non-technical summaries are each undergoing their final internal staff review and are expected to be sent to the DHS Director's office within the next couple weeks for release approval.

OTHER EDUCATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE UNIT ACTIVITIES

Fact Sheets: The Education Unit staff continue to revise drafts of the updated School Interpretation of Measurements fact sheet and the Frequently Asked Questions about EMF in Residences fact sheet.

Wiring Video Introductory Sheet: This short description of the video on improper wiring in schools, with ordering instructions, has been approved for distribution by the Department of Health Services. It is posted on the California EMF Program Web site's general information page at <http://www.dnai.com/~emf/general.html>.

Glossary: The Health Education Assistant is creating a glossary that will help the public better understand the terminology used in the Program's fact sheets.

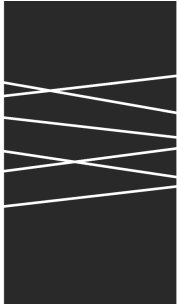
Response to Public Questions: In the last two months, the California EMF Program has received a larger volume of telephone calls and e-mails than usual, mostly due to the distribution of the PG&E EMF bill insert in late December and January. Most of these 100+ contacts were from people with questions about EMF in their home or work environments.

Web Site: The status of current research and educational projects has been updated on our web site. Additionally, the Occupational Exposure Survey is now available on our web site at www.dnai.com/~emf/research.html.

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